

Welcome

Call to Worship - "See how much our Heavenly Father loves us
For He allows us to be called His children.
Think of it - We are called children of God
For that is who we truly are!" - *1 John 3 v 1*

Hymn 478 - Behold the amazing gift of love

Behold the amazing gift of love
The Father has bestowed
On us the sinful sons of men
To call us sons of God

Concealed as yet this honour lies
By this dark world unknown
A world that knew not when He came
Even God's eternal Son

High is the rank we now possess
But higher we shall rise
Though what we shall hereafter be
Is hid from mortal eyes

Our souls we know when he appears
Shall bear his image bright
For all his glory full disclosed
Shall open to our sight

A hope so great and so divine
May trials well endure
And purge the soul from sense and sin
As Christ himself is pure
Scottish Paraphrases (1781)

Prayer and Lord's Prayer (sins)

Lord God, You truly are our Father and we are Your children
You love each single one of us with an everlasting love
You watch over us day and night and You will never let us go
Your majesty and greatness overwhelm us
Your Creation makes us gasp in awe
Your provision for us is unsurpassed.

You alone are our strength
You alone are our comfort
You alone are our Guide
You are our Redeemer

You have dealt with all our sin in the cross at Calvary
You love us so much that You gave us Your only Son
Who suffered and died there for each one of us
There is no greater love than that.

Father, we confess that we have not loved You as we should
Neither have we loved our neighbours as much as we love ourselves
There have been times when we have only followed You when it suited us
We have given up when things became too hard.

Forgive us Father for our lack of faith, for our inconsistency and selfishness
We need Your forgiveness each day Father
And we are eternally grateful that You are always willing to forgive us
when we turn to You in repentance - Thank You Father.

Father God, prepare us for all that lies ahead of us this week.
Guide us as we study Your Word
Let us be open to the leading of Your Holy Spirit.
Encourage us to talk things over with You as we pray
Always ready to listen for Your voice.
Let us go out into our communities knowing that You go before us
And that, with You beside us we need never be afraid.

And we further pray in the words of Jesus:

Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your Name
Your Kingdom come, Your will be done
On Earth as in Heaven
Give us today our daily bread
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those who sin against us
Save us from the time of trial
And deliver us from evil
For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours
Now and for ever.
Amen.

New Testament Reading - Romans 8 v 9-17 (GNB) - (*Ann Blundell*)

⁹ But you do not live as your human nature tells you to; instead, you live as the Spirit tells you to— if, in fact, God's Spirit lives in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ lives in you, the Spirit is life for you^[a] because you have been put right with God, even though your bodies are going to die because of sin. ¹¹ If the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from death, lives in you, then he who raised Christ from death will also give life to your mortal bodies by the presence of his Spirit in you.

¹² So then, my friends, we have an obligation, but it is not to live as our human nature wants us to. ¹³ For if you live according to your human nature, you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you put to death your sinful actions, you will live. ¹⁴ Those who are led by God's Spirit are God's children. ¹⁵ For the Spirit that God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God's children, and by the Spirit's power we cry out to God, "Father! my Father!" ¹⁶ God's Spirit joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Since we are his children, we will possess the blessings he keeps for his people, and we will also possess with Christ what God has kept for him; for if we share Christ's suffering, we will also share his glory.

Hymn 550 - As the deer

As the deer pants for the water,
so my soul longs after you.
You alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you.
*You alone are my strength, my shield,
to you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you.*

I want you more than gold or silver;
only you can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy-giver,
and the apple of my eye.

You're my friend and you are my brother,
even though you are a King.
I love you more than any other,
so much more than anything.
Martin J. Nystrom (b. 1956)

Prayer - (Rev. Scott Guy)

Hymn 559 - There is a Redeemer

There is a Redeemer Jesus God's own Son
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Holy One

*Thank you O my Father for giving us Your Son
And leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done*

Jesus my Redeemer
Name above all names
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
O for sinners slain

*Thank you O my Father for giving us Your Son
And leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done*

When I stand in glory
I will see His face
And there I'll serve my King forever
In that Holy Place

*Thank you O my Father for giving us Your Son
And leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done*
Melody Green (1949)

Bible Teaching - Isaiah 63 v 7-16 (GNB) - 'God our Father'

Today is Father's Day - the day when we remember and give thanks for our earthly fathers.
For all that they are, all that they have done for us and all that they mean to us.

So this morning we will look together at
GOD OUR FATHER - all that HE is, all that HE has done for us and all that HE means to us!

ISAIAH 63 v 7-16 (GNB)

The LORD's Goodness to Israel

⁷ I will tell of the LORD's unfailing love;
I praise him for all he has done for us.
He has richly blessed the people of Israel
because of his mercy and constant love.

⁸ The LORD said, "They are my people; they will not deceive me." And so he saved them ⁹ from all their suffering. It was not an angel, but the LORD himself who saved them. In his love and compassion he rescued them. He had always taken care of them in the past, ¹⁰ but they rebelled against him and made his holy spirit sad. So the LORD became their enemy and fought against them.

¹¹ But then they^[a] remembered the past, the days of Moses, the servant of the LORD, and they asked, "Where now is the LORD, who saved the leaders of his people from the sea? Where is the LORD, who gave his spirit to Moses? ¹²⁻¹³ Where is the LORD, who by his power did great things through Moses, dividing the waters of the sea and leading his people through the deep water, to win everlasting fame for himself?"

Led by the LORD, they were as sure-footed as wild horses, and never stumbled. ¹⁴ As cattle are led into a fertile valley, so the LORD gave his people rest. He led his people and brought honor to his name.

A Prayer for Mercy and Help

¹⁵ LORD, look upon us from heaven, where you live in your holiness and glory. Where is your great concern for us? Where is your power? Where are your love and compassion? Do not ignore us. ¹⁶ You are our father. Our ancestors Abraham and Jacob do not acknowledge us, but you, LORD, are our father, the one who has always rescued us

This passage is entitled "The Lord's Goodness to Israel."
And here the prophet Isaiah expresses what each one of us could express about God as our Father.

First of all - HIS LOVE
"I will tell of His unfailing love."
Martin Smith's hymn puts it like this:

"I could sing of Your love forever -
Over the mountains and the sea
Your river runs with love for me
And I will open up my heart
And let the Healer set me free
I'm happy to be in the truth
And I will daily lift my hands
For I will always sing
Of when Your love came down.

I could sing of Your love forever (x4)”

“I will tell of the Lord’s unfailing love,” says Isaiah.

And there are two things to note here -

First of all - You and I must be SO CONVINCED of His great love for us that we will tell others about it!

“Love Divine, all loves excelling
Joy of Heaven to Earth come down.”
“Love came down at Christmas, love all
lovely, love Divine.”

We MUST tell others about Jesus and His love!

“Tell me the old, old story,
Tell me the old, old story,
Tell me the old, old story
Of Jesus and His love!”

We MUST tell those around us about how Jesus, by His Holy Spirit helps us day by day, through all our ups and downs - because HE LOVES US!

We must tell them about Jesus as our personal Friend, our Helper & our LORD!

As we have often sung:
“You’re my Friend & You are my Brother,
Even though You are a King.
I love You more than any other,
So much more than anything.”

We must tell others:
“What a Friend we have in Jesus!”

The second thing is -
His love is UNFAILING.
He NEVER FAILS to love us!
He never fails to love us!
Or show His love for us,
His love ENDURES!
His love endures FOREVER!

“Give thanks to the Lord, our God & King
His love endures forever.
For He is good, He is above all things,
His love endures forever.”

Psalm 136 says:

“Give thanks to the Lord, because He is

good: His love endures forever!
Give thanks to the greatest of all gods:
His love endures forever!

Give thanks to the mightiest of all Lords:
His love endures forever!
He alone performs great miracles:
His love endures forever!

Give thanks to the God of Heaven:
His love endures forever!

God's love for you and me never fails.
He never gives up on us.
He never forgets about us.
He never abandons us.

In Isaiah 49 v 14-16 the people of Jerusalem said:

“The Lord has abandoned us,
He has forgotten us.”

And the Lord answers them:

“ Can a woman forget her own baby and
not love the child she bore?

Even if a mother SHOULD forget her child, I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU!

Jerusalem, My people, I can NEVER forget you.
I have written your name on the palms of
My hands!”

His love for us never fails.
As the last part of verse 7 states:
“His love is CONSTANT!”

And so, along with the prophet Isaiah:

We praise Him for all that He has done
for us.
We proclaim that the Lord has richly blessed us.
We tell of how He has shown us His great mercy and His constant love.”

As Psalm 23 puts it:
“Surely goodness & mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.”

Our God has been merciful to each one of us. He has shown us His mercy.

But what does that actually mean?
What does it mean to show mercy to someone?

It means to PARDON them.
It means to FORGIVE them for something they have done.

Some has described God's mercy as:
"Not getting what we deserve."

God pardons us. He forgives us.
He lets us off.
He does not hold it against us.

Each one of us is guilty, guilty of sin, of going our own way - but God pardon us,
He is merciful to us!

Micah 7 v 18 in the Message translation:

"Where is the god who can compare with You -
Wiping the slate clean of guilt,

Turning a blind eye, a deaf ear to the past sins of Your precious people?

You don't nurse Your anger
You don't stay angry long -

For MERCY is Your speciality,
That's what You love most!"

And moving on in our reading from Isaiah
in verses 8 & 9:

"The Lord said: 'They are My people; they will not deceive Me.' And so He saved them from all
their suffering.

It was not an angel, but the Lord Himself who saved them. In His love and compassion He rescued
them!"

Or as the Message puts it:
"He did not send someone else -
He did it Himself - in Person!"

And surely this is pointing forward to Jesus, the Son of God, the Saviour,
the Lord, the Lord Himself!"

God could only save us from our sins,
God could only rescue us, by coming HIMSELF- in the form of His Son!

Such a vital and important work could never have been done by an angel
(a messenger).
It could only be done by God Himself!

As our Easter hymn puts it:
"There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin; HE ONLY could unlock the gate of
Heaven, and let us in."

Jesus is our Saviour!

Jesus is our Rescuer!
Jesus is our Redeemer!

“My Jesus, my SAVIOUR,
Lord there is none like You
All of my days, I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love.”

Or as we have just sung:

“There is a REDEEMER,
Jesus, God’s own Son.
Precious Lamb of God - Messiah
Holy One.”

By His sacrificial death on the cross and glorious resurrection from the dead, Jesus, the Son of God has made it possible for you and me to be forgiven!

Forgiven of all our sins, past, present and future and therefore, able to enter into God’s Holy Presence and enjoy living with Him forever!

Jesus has done it all for us!
He has made salvation and forgiveness possible!

He has done HIS PART.
OUR PART is to BELIEVE that He has done this for us (believe that He has died for OUR sins & rose again from the dead).

And to RECEIVE Him, by His Holy Spirit into our lives to take charge.

BELIEVE and RECEIVE!

As John 1 v 12 puts it:
“To all who RECEIVED Him, to those who
BELIEVED in His Name, He gave the right to be called CHILDREN OF GOD!”

The Lord our God has saved us.
It is through HIM ALONE that salvation is possible!

Now, let’s move on a bit in our reading from Isaiah to verse 16:

“You are our Father. Our ancestors Abraham and Jacob do not acknowledge us, but You, Lord are our Father, the One who has always rescued us.”

Other translations say: “But You are our Father, STILL!

And we recall the hymn: “Eternal Fater, strong to save.”

The Message puts it:
“YOU are our Father, Abraham & Israel are long dead, but YOU are our LIVING FATHER, our Redeemer, famous from eternity.”

“You are our LIVING Father!”

I am very fortunate to have my father John still with me and we will see him in a few days time.

And some of you are similarly fortunate.

Sadly for others, your fathers are no longer with you.

All of us will, sadly, one day, lose our earthly fathers - BUT WE WILL NEVER, EVER LOSE OUR HEAVENLY FATHER!

Sadly, my father John, is 94 and suffering from dementia. He is very well looked after in a Nursing Home in Aberdeen and we are able to visit him regularly.

The other week we had one of our best visits in years, talking about family, about work and sport and about his army days.

He even sang us a song.

But, sadly, there are times when he does not know who I am and conversation can be difficult. And it is, in times like these, that I and those of you in similar situations with parents, can take some comfort in these words from Matthew Henry:

“God alone is the immortal Father, who always knows us and is never at a distance from us and is our everlasting Redeemer.”

How good it is to have an earthly father who loves us and cares for us and watches out for us, who teaches us new skills and encourages us.

A father of whom we can be proud - proud to be his son or daughter, proud to call him ‘Dad.’

And how good it is to have an Eternal Father, our Ever-living Father, who is with us always, even until the end of time!

We can ALWAYS be proud of Him -
Just as He is proud of us!

For remember, He tells us in Isaiah 43 v4:

“You are PRECIOUS to Me,
you are HONOURED and I LOVE YOU!”

Isn't it great to hear these words and know that God is addressing them to us?

WE are PRECIOUS to God our Father.
That means that we are of infinite value to Him.
We are unique and beyond compare.

We are HONOURED to God our Father.
He respects us.
We have our own integrity, our own dignity.

We are LOVED by our Heavenly Father.
He declares His devotion to us when He says: “I love you!”

We know that those three little words mean so much to us when we hear them.
But to hear them from God Himself -
now that is something else.
That is TRULY AWESOME!

But we know that it is not enough just to SAY those words.
Whoever says them to us has to really mean them.

They have to SHOW us that they love us.
They have to DEMONSTRATE their love for us.
Their words have to be backed up with actions.

And that's exactly what God has done,
as Isaiah tells us here.

He MADE us, in His own likeness.
He has SET US FREE.
He is ALWAYS WITH US.
He GAVE UP EVERYTHING for us.

He has PROVED that He love us by all that He has done for us and is still doing!

There's a children's hymn which goes:

"I'm special, because God has loved me
For He gave the best thing that He had to save me.

His own Son, Jesus, crucified for all the bad things I have done.

Thank You Jesus, thank You Lord
For loving me so much
I know I don't deserve anything.

Help me feel Your love right now
To know within my heart
That I'm Your special friend."

Never forget that you are SPECIAL!
Never forget that you are PRECIOUS!
Never forget that you are HONOURED!

Never forget that God thinks you are GREAT!

And never forget that GOD LOVES YOU!
Loves you with an EVERLASTING, NEVER-ENDING, ETERNAL LOVE!
Never forget that HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER!

The apostle John, in his first letter reminds us that "GOD IS LOVE!"

On this Father's Day, as we think about and remember our own earthly fathers,
let us give thanks to HIM,

to THE ONE TRUE FATHER, Who made us, Who set us free, Who is always with us, Who gave up everything for us and Who will love us forever!

I close with the words which I read out at the beginning of our worship:

“SEE HOW MUCH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER LOVES US.
FOR HE ALLOWS US TO BE CALLED HIS CHILDREN.

THINK OF IT - WE ARE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD -
FOR THAT IS WHO WE TRULY ARE!

Hymn 511 - Your hand, O God has guided

Your hand, O God, has guided
your flock, from age to age;
the wondrous tale is written,
full clear, on every page;
your people owned your goodness,
and we their deeds record;
and both of this bear witness:
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Your heralds brought glad tidings
to greatest as to least;
they summoned all to hasten
and share the great King's feast;
and this was all their teaching,
in every deed and word,
to all alike proclaiming:
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Through many a day of darkness,
through many a scene of strife,
the faithful few fought bravely
to guard the nation's life.
Their Gospel of redemption,
sin pardoned, life restored,
was all in this enfolded:
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Your mercy will not fail us,
nor leave your work undone;
with your right hand to help us,
your victory shall be won;
by mortals and by angels
your name shall be adored,
and this shall be their anthem:
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Edward Hayes Plumtre (1821–1891)

Benediction - 'And now may
the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the Love of God
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all, now and forevermore.'

(3 fold Amen)